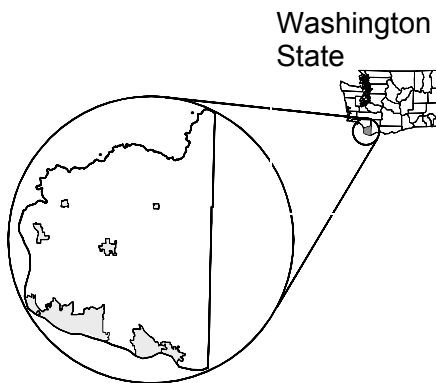

Clark County

Clark County, which had the largest increase in population from 2000-2004 in the state of Washington, and one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the United States, is located in the heart of the Pacific Northwest. The City of Vancouver, the County seat, is home to Historic Fort Vancouver built by Hudson's Bay Company in 1824. Prominent geographic features, a rich heritage, abundant natural resources, and an expanding economy have influenced the past, and continue to influence the direction set by Clark County leadership. The following sections *Local Community* and *County Government* explore and describe the County's physical characteristics, demographics, economy, organizational structure, and elected offices.

Local Community

The planning and budget process is impacted by numerous factors, including current trends and issues which emanate at the regional and/or national levels. The information that follows describes the environmental, community, and economic factors that determine governing and budgetary decisions at the local level.



Geography and Climate

Located in southwestern Washington State, Clark County is approximately 70 miles from the Pacific Ocean. It is physically compact, measuring approximately 25 miles across in either direction, encompassing 656 square miles. The Columbia River forms the western and southern boundaries of the County, with over 40 miles of river frontage. The Columbia is the only fresh-water harbor accommodating ocean-going commerce on the entire West Coast of North America, and the only water-grade route through the Cascade Range between Canada and California.

While the Columbia River forms the County's southern boundary, the Lewis River forms the northern perimeter. Annual rainfall averaging 40 inches a year contributes to other waterways and lakes in the region, such as the Washougal River, Salmon Creek, and Lacamas Lake.

Clark County lies within the Willamette-Puget trough, a geographic basin created by the Cascade and Pacific Coast mountain ranges. The Cascade Mountain range dominates the eastern border of the region, with the frosty white peaks of Mount St. Helens, Mount Hood, and Mount Adams prominent features on a clear day. The Cascades extend from southwestern Canada, through the States of Washington and Oregon, into northern California. The mountain range was named for the great cascades of the Columbia River.

The climate in Clark County is influenced by this geography, which produces the wet, mild winters and moderately dry summers, characteristic of the region. About 70% of annual precipitation occurs between the months of November through March. An annual average temperature of 51° Fahrenheit provides a mild, yet temperate, climate.

Growth and Urbanization

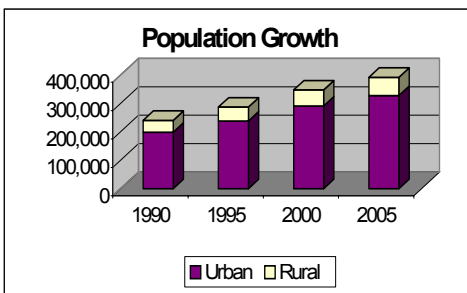
Sustained population growth, especially in the unincorporated areas of the region, is one of the most significant factors impacting the County's planning and budgetary processes.

Clark County continues to transition from a small, urbanized area surrounded by rural farmlands, to a suburban-urban setting. Population in Clark County has been on the increase since 1971. The County experienced rapid growth in the mid-to-late 1970s, which slowed tremendously in the early 1980s as the local economy weakened. However, due to diversification of local industries throughout the 1980s, the County was able to deflect an economic slowdown. The County has experienced a period of rapid, prolonged growth since 1987.

Growth in Clark County can be attributed to a number of factors. These include its relationship with the Portland, Oregon metropolitan area, transportation facilities, expanding business base and quality of life. The County is included in the Portland, Oregon standard metropolitan statistical area (SMSA). Clark County represents 20% of the SMSA 2005 population compared to 16% of 1990.

In December 1994, Clark County adopted a comprehensive land use plan pursuant to the State of Washington Growth Management Act of 1990. The Clark County 20-year Comprehensive Growth Management Plan identified key indicators to be compiled and summarized on an annual basis. The Department of Community Development completed the first analysis of available data in 2000, for the period 1995-1999. The report provided an overview of population, housing, employment, wages, per capita income, land absorption, and urban versus rural development. In September 2004, Clark County completed its most recent updating process and adopted a new 20-Year Comprehensive Growth Management Plan. As adopted, the plan is intended to guide growth through December 2023. The current Plan is focused on expanding urban growth boundaries, projecting population growth, planning housing needs, balancing growth in rural and urban areas, determining density and zoning, paying for growth and concurrency, and locating business, industry, and jobs.

Demographics



Clark County is the most rapidly developing of Washington's counties and has gained attention as one of the fastest growing areas in the nation. Sustained population growth, especially in the unincorporated areas of the region, is one of the most significant factors impacting the County's planning and budgetary processes. In the last thirty years, Clark County's population has increased 261 percent. In total, the County grew by approximately 185,000 residents (90%) from 1985 to 2005. Over the five-year period from 2000 through 2004, Clark County's population increased by 39,529. Of that increase 56% or 22,056 new people moved into the unincorporated area, and 44% or 17,473 new residents migrated to the urban area.

In 1980, the County's 192,227 residents (308 people per square mile) accounted for 4.7 percent of the State's population. Today, Clark County's estimated 2005 population of 391,683 (597 persons per square mile), represents over 6% of the state's population.

**According to the US Census, estimated
People Quick Facts for Clark County,
include:**

Total 2005 Estimated Population	391,683
% Change in Population (1985-05)	90.0
% Population under 18 years old	28.7
% Population 65 years and older	9.5
% White Population	88.8
% Black Population	1.7
% American Indian, Eskimo or Aleut Population	0.8
% Asian or Pacific Islander Population	3.6
% Hispanic Population	4.7
% College Graduates, 25 years & older (2000 Census)	22.1
Homeownership rate (2000)	67.3
# Households (2004)	151,951
Median Household Income (2004)	\$51,752

The Washington Office of Financial Management conservatively projects the population of Clark County will reach just over 500,000 people by the year 2020.

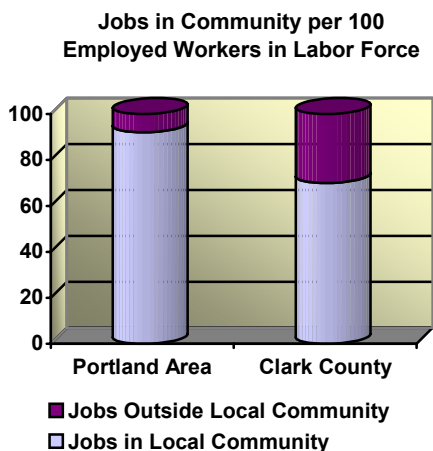
Local Economy

The economy in Clark County has grown steadily since the late 1980's. Clark County's traditional manufacturing base experienced little employment loss during the extensive restructuring of the past two decades. Important sectors such as paper products, aluminum smelting, lumber and wood products, food processing, textiles and apparel have long been a prime source of higher paying jobs. Relatively low development costs and a strong labor force have attracted branch plants to the County. High technology industries such as Hewlett-Packard, Sharp, SEH America, Kyocera and Matsushita Electric have located in Clark County since the late 1980's, replacing the historic dominance of the lumber industry. More recent industrial expansions sited in the City of Camas include Underwriters Laboratories and Wafer Tech. The growth of high tech jobs in the County has contributed markedly to stabilizing and diversifying the local economy.

As the county's population has grown dramatically, so has the need for retail marketplaces. Costco Wholesale, Home Depot, Wal-Mart, Target, and a lengthy list of grocery stores have taken advantage of higher densities and transportation congestion to pull local consumers away from the Portland market.

Despite the 1991 recession, the Clark County economy proved remarkably resilient. Unemployment rates had consistently hovered between three and four percent since 1994, with the local unemployment always somewhat below the state average. However, as the nation headed towards a recessionary period beginning in late 1999, local unemployment surged to national highs, peaking at 8.7% in 2003. Clark County concluded 2004 with unemployment of 6.5%, slightly ahead of the state's average of 5.8%.

The local labor force increased from 127,500 in 1990 to 192,700 in 2004. Employment in the manufacturing sector of the County increased to approximately 20,000 jobs, or 11% between 1990 and 2005. Jobs in the wholesale / retail trade and service sectors experienced a rate of increase of 74%; with jobs in Transportation and Public Utilities growing at the fastest rate of 92%. Government employment was just under 17% of the labor force or 20,400 jobs, whereas construction and mining was approximately 8%, also expanding at a significant rate of 53% since 1990.



Clark County's robust, diverse, and growing economy is integrally linked with the Portland, Oregon metropolitan area. Transportation facilities, serving both sides of the river, have created a regional hub for commerce. The area has served deep-sea commerce since 1906. Large oceangoing ships can navigate the lower Columbia River as far as the Ports of Vancouver and Portland; and with the aid of locks, smaller marine vessels can continue to the Dalles, Oregon. Transcontinental rail lines serving the County traverse major north-south and east-west routes. Interstate 5 and 205 freeways provide access to the vital economic centers of Seattle, Washington, San Francisco, California, and points beyond. The Portland International Airport, just fifteen minutes south of Vancouver, is an essential community and economic development asset.

Generally considered a *bedroom community* to Portland, many of Clark County's traditional sectors actually pre-date the rise of metropolitan Portland. As the cost of doing business in Portland rises, the County will become increasingly more attractive to expanding corporations. However, Clark County is experiencing an increasing demand for services, characteristic of the residential nature of a bedroom community, thereby creating a challenging situation for Clark County leadership. A rise in industrial and commercial development is needed to generate the compulsory increases in public revenues that are required to satisfy growing service demands.

Despite rapid population and employment growth, wages in Clark County have remained below the state average. Official estimates indicate per capita income in 2000 at 92.9% of the state average, little changed over the 1991 rate of 91.2%, with per capita income in the County equaling the national average. Clark has a smaller share of high-paying corporate-services such as law, banking, securities, insurance and consulting due to the proximity to Portland. The County's employment base has changed from manufacturing and government (almost 60 percent of all jobs in 1970) to one dominated by retail trade and services (50 percent of all jobs in 2005).

In addition to the economic growth in Clark County the completion of a full-service satellite Washington State University (WSU) campus in Vancouver has enhanced the availability of higher education opportunities in the Clark County area. WSU-Vancouver is the primary provider of undergraduate and graduate level college education in the County. Clark County has a relatively well-developed higher education sector, as well as access to additional programs in the greater Portland area.

Annexation

Annexation is the process whereby a city expands its boundaries to encompass new areas. This can happen when a majority of the residents of an area adjacent to a city vote to be annexed, or when the owners representing 60% of the property value in such an area sign petitions for annexation.

A significant portion of local tax revenues generated by the annexed area shift from the County to the city when an annexation occurs. The main revenue sources affected are sales tax (85 percent of which goes to the annexing city) and property tax (of which the Road Fund portion, or about 57 percent, goes to the city). At the same time, responsibilities and expenses for providing many services to the annexed area (notably law enforcement protection, road maintenance, and parks maintenance) are also shifted from the County to the annexing city. The County retains responsibility for regional services to the newly incorporated area such as court systems, public health and jail services.

The financial effects of annexations on the County depend on the level of service demands shifted to the annexing city. If the shifted service costs exceed the revenues lost, the net effect on County finances is positive. More resources become available for regional services and local services to unincorporated area residents. If the revenues lost exceed the service costs, the impact is negative, and County-provided service levels are likely to suffer. Typically, annexations of areas which are predominantly residential have a positive net effect on County finances, while annexations of areas

Significant portions of the local tax revenues generated by the annexed area are transferred from the County to the annexing city when an annexation occurs.

which are predominantly commercial have a negative net effect.

The Vancouver Mall annexation was the first of a series of annexations that reshaped the structure and functions of County government in this community. A team of staff from the City and the County work together to ensure that collaborative transition planning is completed during periods of annexations.

The 1997 annexation by the City of Vancouver of the Evergreen and Cascade Park areas, included 57,500 citizens, and was the largest annexation in the history of Washington State. A transition agreement with Vancouver mitigated the impact of this annexation, but the significant impacts of this and prior annexations go well beyond their short-term financial effects. A few small annexations occurred between 2001 and 2004 with preliminary discussions for the annexation of Orchards currently underway.

Quality of Life / Recreation

The Pacific Ocean and beaches to the west, Mount Hood and Mount Adams ski areas, Gifford Pinchot National Forest, as well as Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument are all within an hour's drive. The Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, originating in Clark County, is renown for sightseeing and recreational opportunities, including world class windsurfing and boating.

Clark County, situated along the mighty Columbia River with the majestic Cascade Mountains for a backdrop, is an ideal setting for work and play. Residents enjoy the opportunity to choose a rural lifestyle, within close proximity to urban amenities. There are a wide variety of recreational opportunities and cultural activities in the area, complimenting the well-balanced economy and comparatively advantageous tax structure.

The County has over 20 art organizations, many available through the Columbia Arts Center; and numerous community events such as the Clark County Fair and Fourth of July Festival. There are numerous historical sites and museums throughout the region, including the Vancouver National Historic Reserve. The metropolitan amenities of Portland are just minutes away across the Columbia River.

Recreational opportunities are numerous in and around Clark County. There are over 40 miles of Columbia River frontage for fishing and boating. The Pacific Ocean and beaches to the west, Mount Hood and Mount Adams ski areas, Gifford Pinchot National Forest, as well as Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument are all within an hour's drive. The Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, originating in Clark County, is renowned for sightseeing and recreational opportunities, including world class windsurfing and boating. Picnicking, hiking, equestrian trails, bicycling, canoeing, fishing, hunting, skiing, swimming, and boating are popular activities. A diverse selection of golf courses can be found in the County and Portland metropolitan area.

The County has partnered with the City of Vancouver to operate a jointly funded parks and recreation program. There are 63 city parks and 8 regional parks, along with other special facilities for local residents, including the Columbia River Renaissance Project, providing multi-use development and access to the Columbia River. An additional 35 park properties have been acquired with funding available for development. With the successful creation of the Metropolitan Parks District, construction of the 35 parks and at least 37 sports fields will be spread over seven or eight years. All of the sports fields will be placed in the five larger parks.

A county is a political subdivision of the state. Counties derive their existence from state law and powers expressly conferred by the state constitution and state laws.

Locally elected officials, including the Board of County Commissioners govern counties, and these officials have considerable latitude to establish policies on the basis of the local community's needs and preferences.

County Government

In the United States, government is divided into separate branches (legislative, executive, and judicial) and layers (federal, state, and local). Each branch and each layer is partially independent of the others. At the local level, government is further divided among general-purpose entities, like cities and counties, and a number of special purpose districts, such as school, utility, and fire districts. Finally, separate local governments often form cooperative inter-local agencies to carry out designated responsibilities.

Therefore, no government entity stands entirely on its own. Rather, each entity is part of a network of governments, working together to deliver services to the public.

To understand a particular unit of government, it is useful to have a concept of its place in the overall system. The purpose of this section is to generally explain how Clark fits into this system, and how county government relates to the federal government, the State of Washington, the cities within the County's borders, and the many special districts which serve Clark County's residents.

A county is a political subdivision of the state. Counties derive their existence from state law and powers expressly conferred by the state constitution and state laws. For example, counties are required to appraise property values for tax purposes, and to collect property taxes from their residents. In this regard, counties act as agents for state government.

Locally elected officials, including the Board of County Commissioners govern counties. These officials establish policies on the basis of state law and in the context of local community needs and preferences.

Counties co-exist with a variety of other overlapping local government entities, including cities. The relationship between county and city governments can be slightly confusing. Many County services are "regional," meaning that they are provided to all residents of the County, regardless of the jurisdictional limits of a city. Property appraisal is a good example. The County appraises all property, whether or not it lies within an incorporated city. Local county services, however, such as Sheriff's patrol, are generally provided only in the unincorporated portion of the County.

Organization of County Government

Clark County is a *statute county*, which means that the organization of the County is prescribed by state statute. The following organization chart provides a bird's-eye view of the County structure, including its elected officials, administrator, and major departments. For simplicity, the chart does not include the numerous inter-local organizations, advisory boards, or other organizations that are partially or wholly under the jurisdiction of the County.

Locally elected officials, including the Board of County Commissioners govern counties, and these officials have considerable latitude to establish policies on the basis of the local community's needs and preferences.

As the following chart depicts, the voters of Clark County elect twenty-four officials, including three County Commissioners, nine Superior Court Judges, six District Court Judges, an Assessor, a Treasurer, an Auditor, a Prosecuting Attorney, a Sheriff, and a County Clerk.

The Board of Commissioners appoints a County Administrator, who acts as the chief executive officer for the County. Reporting directly to the County Administrator are the heads of the nine major non-elected departments:

- Community Services and Corrections (the County's social service agency)
- Community Development
- Health Department
- Human Resources
- General Services (purchasing, facilities, risk management, printing, mailroom, and telecommunications)
- Public Works
- Office of Budget and Information Services
- Medical Examiner
- Public Information and Outreach

County Elected Officials

Board of County Commissioners - The three-member Board of County Commissioners is the County's legislative body. The Board levies all County taxes and appropriates all funds for expenditure through the budget process. It sets land use policy in the unincorporated area and hears appeals to land use decisions. It enacts ordinances that have the force of law in the County. It appoints members of citizen advisory panels, hearings examiners, and members of the Board of Equalization. It approves all contracts and grant agreements. The Board adopts the County budget. Finally, it appoints the County Administrator, the chief executive of the County. Primary elections of Commissioners are held by district, while the general election is county wide. Commissioners serve a four-year term. Election terms are staggered so that no more than two Commissioners stand for election in any single year.

Assessor - The Assessor is responsible for the appraisal of all real and personal property in the County for the purpose of assessing property taxes. The Assessor also supervises the County's Geographic Information System (GIS). The Assessor is elected at large to a four-year term.

Treasurer - The Treasurer is responsible for the collection of all property taxes, the distribution of property tax revenues to the State and other taxing districts, receipting all money received by the County, and cash and investment management. The Treasurer provides services both to the County and to other government entities, including school and fire districts. The Treasurer is elected at large to a four-year term.

Auditor - The Auditor is responsible for the recording of documents, titles, and deeds; the issuance of marriage licenses; the issuance of motor vehicle licenses; and the conduct of all elections. The Auditor also provides accounting services, performs fiscal analyses, and conducts audits. The Auditor is elected at large to a four-year term.

Clark County Elected Officials

Dates shown represent the expiration date of the officials' current term.

Commissioner (District 1):

Betty Sue Morris..... 12/31/08

Commissioner (District 2):

Marc Boldt..... 12/31/08

Commissioner (District 3):

Steve Stuart..... 12/31/05

Assessor:

Linda Franklin..... 12/31/06

Treasurer:

Doug Lasher..... 12/31/06

Auditor:

Greg Kimsey..... 12/31/06

Prosecutor:

Art Curtis..... 12/31/06

Sheriff:

Garry Lucas..... 12/31/06

Clerk:

JoAnne McBride..... 12/31/06

Superior Court Judges

Dates shown represent the expiration date of the officials' present term.

Department One:

Roger A. Bennett 12/31/08

Department Two:

John P. Wulle 12/31/08

Department Three:

John F. Nichols 12/31/08

Department Four:

Edwin L. Poyfair 12/31/08

Department Five:

Robert L. Harris 12/31/08

Department Six:

Barbara D. Johnson 12/31/08

Department Seven:

James E. Rulli 12/31/08

Department Eight:

Diane M. Woolard 12/31/08

Department Nine:

Robert Lewis 12/31/08

District Court Judges

Dates shown represent the expiration date of the officials' present term.

District One:

Vernon L. Schreiber 12/31/06

District Two:

Scott S. Anders 12/31/06

District Three:

Darvin J. Zimmerman 12/31/06

District Four:

Kenneth R. Eiesland 12/31/06

District Five:

Randal B. Fritzler 12/31/06

District Six

To be filled May 2005 12/31/06

Prosecutor - The Prosecuting Attorney is responsible for the prosecution of all crimes and violations of County ordinances. The Prosecutor also acts as legal counsel to the County and other local government entities. In addition, the victim/witness assistance program, adult diversion program, and the child support enforcement program are under the supervision of the Prosecutor. The State of Washington reimburses the County for one-half of the Prosecutor's salary. The Prosecutor is elected at large to a four-year term.

Sheriff - The Sheriff is responsible for the provision of police services in the unincorporated portion of the county, including patrol, criminal investigation, and emergency response. In addition, the Sheriff administers the regional County Jail. The Sheriff is elected at large to a four-year term.

Superior Court Judges - Superior Court is the trial court for all felonies and civil cases involving amounts over \$50,000. Superior Court also has jurisdiction over divorce, probate, juvenile, competency and domestic cases. Superior Court Judges are considered to be partially employed by the State of Washington, so the State pays one-half of their salaries and all of their benefits. Clark County has nine Superior Court Judges who are elected at large to four-year terms.

District Court Judges - District Court is the trial court for ordinance infractions, misdemeanors, and civil cases involving amounts up to \$50,000. Clark County has six District Court Judges who are elected at large to four-year terms.

Clerk - The County Clerk is responsible for maintaining the permanent records of the Superior Court, including all legal filings and records of all court proceedings. The Clerk is also responsible for receipting all monies received by the Superior Court. The Clerk is elected at large to a four-year term.

CLARK COUNTY. organization chart

VOTERS OF CLARK COUNTY

